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SUBJECT: THE OSCE'S ROLE IN ADVANCING U.S.-RUSSIA RELATIONS
(CORRECTED COPY//PARA SPACING AND GARBLES)

REF: USOSCE 00085

Classified By: Classified By: CDA Kyle Scott. Reason: 1.4 (b)(d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: As efforts to press the reset button in our relations with Russia proceed, the OSCE can be a valuable forum to channel Russia's desire for a larger role in discussion of broad European security themes. With the London summit commitment to start a dialogue on security and stability in Europe, confirmed at Strasbourg-Kehl, it is time to move beyond a defensive posture and begin charting a plan of action that uses the OSCE to advance this process and U.S. interests. This message lays out a suggested series of steps to help us move this process forward and thus contribute to efforts to advance U.S.-Russia relations. END SUMMARY.

Warming Up to Leverage the OSCE

12. (C) Ever since President Medvedev launched his ill-defined proposal for a new binding treaty on European Security in June 2008, we and our Allies have been waiting for details. In the OSCE, Russia has declined to define its goals further. One explanation is that they themselves don't know how to frame a binding international treaty such as they propose. They have an idea, but not a proposal. Tactically, Russia appears comfortable to sit back and see if their grand idea creates divisions in the Alliance or otherwise gains them tactical advantage.

13. (C) Moscow's ambivalence toward the OSCE's human rights agenda has also made Russia reluctant to place their emphasis on Vienna. At the OSCE's Helsinki Ministerial in December, for example, Russia objected to language in the Chairman's summing up document that suggested the OSCE is "a natural forum" to follow up on initiatives on European security. Since Helsinki, however, Russia's opposition to using the OSCE appears to have abated somewhat in the face of a steady chorus of statements by Allies, such as that issued at the

NATO Summit, that the OSCE provides an appropriate, inclusive format to carry on this dialogue. Although Russia's clear intention is to focus on "hard security" measures, and they are still not prepared to see the OSCE as the sole forum for carrying forward these discussions, recent statements by Russian officials appear to have accepted the inevitability of discussions in the OSCE on a comprehensive approach that also includes the human and economic dimensions to security.

Calendar of Meetings on European Security Intensifies

¶4. (C) Like athletes preparing for a race, OSCE delegations are limbering up for a fresh look at security in Europe. The Greek Chairmanship of the OSCE is pressing ahead, and the calendar of meetings devoted to this issue is growing full. In the next three months prior to the U.S.-Russia summit, OSCE delegations will hold an informal PermReps "retreat" to discuss broad European security themes (late April), Austria is hosting a seminar on the future of European security clearly aimed at an OSCE audience (early May), many OSCE delegations will participate in an informal NATO HLTF "stock-taking" session (late May), and Germany will host a seminar on the future of CFE in early June. These meetings will tee up higher-level discussions later in June, with FM Lavrov coming to the OSCE's Annual Security Review Conference on June 23 to present Russia's vision for a new treaty, and the Greek Chairmanship is preparing for an informal meeting of all OSCE Foreign Ministers on a Greek

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island at the end of June.

¶5. (C) Many allies are concerned that the pace is picking up, while neither NATO nor the EU have had a chance to discuss in detail how they want this process to unfold. We should use this series of meetings leading up to the U.S.-Russia summit in July to refine our approach, get input and buy-in from the Allies, and present a coherent set of goals and objectives for this broad security dialogue.

A Game Plan Before the July Summit

¶5. (C) USOSCE believes we should adopt a gameplan that U.S. and Russian leaders can endorse at their July summit to provide a roadmap on a future European security dialogue. We need intensive consultations with the Allies this month to define objectives. This should include a willingness to launch a process of negotiations in two major tracks:

-- A conventional arms control track aimed at overcoming the current impasse on CFE and updating other CSBMs, specifically the Vienna Document 1999; and

-- A broad dialogue aimed at adopting an updated comprehensive security strategy for the OSCE region that would adapt the 1990 Charter of Paris and the 1999 Charter for a New Europe to the challenges of the next decade. In the latter track, Russia can press its case for a binding international agreement, but we suspect they will find few buyers for this approach.

¶6. (C) If our friends and allies are prepared to accept this long-term goal, the next two months can help us advance toward that aspiration. The May visit of FM Lavrov to the U.S. should be used to indicate our willingness to launch such a process, but also indicate firmly to Moscow that Russian behavior will have an impact on how far this dialogue can go. In particular, from a USOSCE perspective, Lavrov should be encouraged to indicate Moscow's good faith as well. An agreement on the future of the UN and OSCE presences in Georgia, including approval of a mode of

operation for international monitors inside South Ossetia and Abkhazia, would be a clear signal.

¶7. (C) We can in turn send signals of our own. Holding another round of talks on the Parallel Actions Package prior to the June 10 Berlin seminar, or even better before the HLTF "stock-taking" session May 27-28, would be an important sign of commitment to conventional arms control and a means of gauging where the Russians are on CFE now. Indication of willingness to consider a limited package of revisions to the Vienna Document 1999 after 10 years would also be received warmly. The Secretary's commitment to attend the informal ministerial proposed by the Greek Chairmanship would likewise indicate the seriousness with which we are approaching this process.

¶8. (C) In the meantime, we should be using this period to develop with the Allies further ideas on key questions facing us in these areas. Will we continue to pursue the current Parallel Actions Package approach and where it is taking CFE, or would it be wise to adjust course? Are we prepared to adjust conventional arms control instruments to accommodate new weaponry and more lethal but smaller rapid reaction units? What elements would we like to see included in a new European security strategy? Can we strengthen human rights commitments, or develop more effective monitoring or enforcement mechanisms in this field? How would we like to

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incorporate newer threats, such as missile proliferation, cyber-security and terrorism, or better reflect environmental security and energy security concerns in a new document? Are there mechanisms short of a binding treaty that we are prepared to entertain that would help assuage Russian concerns about being left out of security decision-making in Europe? And how can we use this process to make progress on the unresolved conflicts in the OSCE region? USOSCE is prepared to engage actively in the policy discussions of all these items as we move down this path.

¶9. (C) If all this work progresses as suggested, we should be prepared for a wide-ranging discussion at the informal OSCE ministerial in late June, which could also result in an agreement in principle on steps forward in this process. This could then be endorsed at the July U.S.-Russia summit as another area of cooperative efforts to move the relationship forward, in parallel with the host of other difficult issues we are tackling on the bilateral agenda. More intense negotiations would be required in the fall of 2009, with important stock-taking at the Athens Ministerial at the end of the year. That would also be an appropriate time to take a decision on our willingness to aim for an OSCE summit to finalize this process, the first such summit since Istanbul in 1999.

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NEIGHBOUR